

A bitter feud pa

CIA

The war inside
the CIA

A war rages
sian turncoat
Oswald's Soviet

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Yuri Nosenko, a lieutenant colonel in the KGB, the Russian secret police, liked his liquor. He already had downed four or five scotches by the time he arrived at the apartment house in suburban Geneva on Jan. 23, 1964.

But this time his need for fortification was understandable.

Yuri Nosenko was on his way to defect to the United States.

Waiting for Nosenko inside the "safe house" was Tennent H. (Pete) Bagley, chief counterspy for the Cen-

tral Intelligence Agency's Soviet Russia Division. Bagley had been CIA station chief in Switzerland when Nosenko sneaked away from a Geneva disarmament conference in June 1962 to volunteer his services as a double agent for the United States, and he had been the Russian's case officer ever since.

At first, Bagley believed the Soviet turncoat's offer to return to Moscow to spy for America was the biggest coup of his 12-year intelligence career. But by 1964, he suspected Nosenko was a KGB plant, a "disinformation" agent dispatched to divert attention away from possible Russian penetration of the upper levels

of the CIA and to absolve the Soviet Union of any complicity in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy by Lee Harvey Oswald two months earlier.

Those suspicions — some CIA sources told *The Bulletin* they amounted to "obsessions" — led to

the most savage internal war in the agency's history. Reputations were blackened as the CIA's espionage capability was used against its own officers in the fight over Nosenko's legitimacy.

Most disquieting was the question raised by Nosenko's sudden and unexpected decision to abandon his wife and two children, and his role as a CIA agent "in place," to seek U.S. asylum: Had the KGB succeeded in placing a double agent, a "mole," high up in the CIA? It is a question that is still being asked today.

Promoted to deputy

Until Nosenko, Bagley's prospects in the CIA appeared unlimited. Blond and handsome, he was 39 when the Russian decided to defect, and he would shortly be promoted to deputy chief of the Soviet Russia Division. One of his bosses, Richard Helms, then second-in-command of CIA and a future director of the agency, told associates that Bagley one day would head the CIA.

Bagley, who attended Princeton and obtained a doctorate in political science from the University of Geneva, came from a distinguished family. His late father, Adm. David W. Bagley, was a hero in both world wars. His two brothers, David and Worth, followed their father into the Navy and also became admirals.

Pete Bagley, however, chose the twilight world of the spy and his career, which flourished for a decade, ultimately was snuffed-out in a kind of corporate struggle within the CIA over Nosenko. Until now, Bagley's involvement in the Nosenko Affair, and the fact that it cost him his job, has been kept secret.

But more than 15 years after Bagley reluctantly smuggled the Russian from Geneva to Frankfurt by car — hiding him on the floor in the rear passenger compartment — and hence to the United States, the Nosenko Affair lives on. The war within the CIA over whether Nosenko is a legitimate defector or a fake has claimed the careers of high-ranking officers on both sides of the battle, aroused passionate hatreds among men once sworn to work together anonymously for the good of the country, and has contributed to the paralysis that grips the agency.

But more than 10 years after CIA says Nosenko's bona fides were accepted, the bitter battle still rages. In an extraordinary display of venom, an official representative of